

Merry Christmas

The Jordan Times will not be published Tuesday, Dec. 26, because of Christmas Day holiday Monday. The next issue of the newspaper will appear Wednesday, Dec. 27. The Jordan Times wishes its readers, advertisers and patrons a very merry Christmas.

JPT/Int'l

Jordan Times

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MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR.



Volume 14 Number 4274

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Israeli soldiers arrest a Palestinian youngster in Arab Jerusalem

Strike, mourning mark third intifada Christmas

BETHLEHEM, occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Israeli soldiers kept watch Sunday from the roof of the Church of Nativity there Jesus was born, but few tourists gathered for Christmas Eve celebrations.

Stores were closed because of a protest strike called by the underground unified national leadership of the uprising, which marks the two-year-old revolt against Israeli rule.

Slogans spray-painted in red and black on city walls called for residents to boycott Christmas Eve celebrations and make it a "mourning day" for Palestinians killed in the uprising.

The highlight of the day's activities was expected to be a sermon by visiting South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu in nearby Shepherds' Field in Beit Sahour, where the first word of Jesus' birth was received by shepherds watching over their flocks at night.

In an interview, the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner told the Associated Press: "We are praying so desperately that the Jews and Arabs may find each other, that the Arabs can understand the Jews' anxiety about their continued existence and that the Jews can hear the cry of the Palestinians for an independent

sovereign state."

He added that he believed "there is no hope for peace" until their aspirations for statehood were met.

Tutu's endorsement of a Palestinian state alienated many Israelis, and two chief rabbis refused to meet with the Anglican human rights activist. There were also fears his visit could provoke Palestinian demonstrations.

Latin Patriarch Monsignor Michel Sabbah led the traditional procession into the Church of Nativity which begins the Christmas Eve ceremonies. He was accompanied to the door by Arab dignitaries and the Israeli military governor of the city who was dressed in an olive drab uniform.

The main streets of Bethlehem were empty except for soldiers and small groups of tourists.

Cars were barred from entering the town centre and visitors to Manger Square had to pass through a metal detector and were subject to searches.

Soldiers and police in groups of two and three with binoculars and automatic rifles took up positions on the roofs of most buildings, including the Church of Nativity, where celebrations culminate with a midnight mass in the Roman Catholic Chapel.

The only sign of celebration

was a 30-member Israeli police band in blue uniforms which played Christmas carols for the 100 to 150 visitors in the square at midday.

"I didn't expect so many police," said Anne Svoboda, a housewife from Ogallala, Nebraska, as she surveyed the tight security in Manger Square near the church that marks the manger site where the Bible says Jesus was born.

Christian leaders have declared Christmas a day of mourning in honour of around 600 Palestinians killed in the revolt. Six Arabs, including a 12-year-old Bethlehem boy shot four months ago by a Jewish settler, have died in the past three days.

Arab merchants in Bethlehem kept their shops closed in response to the strike call by the leaders of the uprising.

Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij criticised the strike, telling Israel radio: "I think to sing out Bethlehem for a strike today is wrong. Jerusalem and the West Bank should have joined hands with us."

Freij appealed for "peace with dignity" for Palestinians.

"Despite all the sufferings that we have been subjected to, we have no hatred in our hearts," he said.

"We support the struggle of the Palestinian people in their longing for statehood," Tutu said.

Freij denounced as a "criminal act" the actions of Israeli soldiers who reportedly confiscated and destroyed identity cards of Palestinians.

In an apparent effort to prevent Islamic fundamentalists from disrupting Christian services, soldiers also turned away Muslims who tried to enter the Manger Square.

Tensions heightened after the death Friday of 12-year-old Mohammad Jamil Kamel a boy shot in the neck Dec. 7 by a Jewish settler.

On Saturday, Muslim fundamentalists burned trees and hurled stones in Bethlehem, prompting border police to close shops and clear the streets of everyone except tourists.

Elsewhere in the occupied lands, 14 Palestinians were wounded in clashes with Israeli soldiers.

Near the Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest site, Tutu bowed his head in a moment of silent prayer at a stone platform built in memory of the Palestinians killed by Israeli-supported militiamen in 1982 at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps near Beirut.

"We support the struggle of the Palestinian people in their longing for statehood," he said.

Amal, Hizbullah fight on despite Iranian truce call

SIDON, Lebanon (AP) — Rival Shi'ite Muslim factions ignored a ceasefire appeal from Iran Sunday and fought fierce battles for a second day in hills above the main coastal highway linking Beirut with South Lebanon.

Police said 25 people were killed and 150 wounded in the battles between Hizbullah (Party of God), and Amal in Iqlim Al Tuffah. That brought the toll in two days to 30 killed and 70 wounded.

It also raised the overall figure to 600 killed and 1,549 wounded since May 1987, when the power struggle erupted between the two factions touching off intermittent confrontations in Beirut and South Lebanon.

In west Beirut, fighters of the Iranian-backed Hizbullah and the pro-Syrian Amal clashed briefly overnight in the main commercial thoroughfare of Hamra.

Police said the clash erupted when Amal militiamen firing machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades tried to storm a Hizbullah religious centre.

A dozen Hizbullah guards defending the controlled-off attack troops moved in and enforced a

ceasefire.

Several cars were wrecked during the attack and the steel shutters of several boutiques, supermarkets and groceries were blown off.

Police said there were no casualties in the clash, markedly less serious than the battles that have raged since dawn Saturday in Iqlim Al Tuffah, or the apple province.

Mohammad Ali Bisharat, Iran's deputy foreign minister, flew from Tehran to the Syrian capital, Damascus, Saturday and declared a ceasefire at midnight (2200 GMT) after meetings with Amal leader, Nabih Berri, who is minister of hydraulic and water resources, and Sheikh Subhi Tofaili, one of Hizbullah's leading clerics.

But the fighting raged on.

Amal rushed reinforcements from Beirut to the south Sunday. An estimated 2,500 fighters, backed by tanks, counterattacked Hizbullah under a barrage of heavy artillery and recaptured two villages, Mjaideh and Kfar Hatta, which had fallen Saturday, police said.

The fighting later centred

around two other villages seized by Hizbullah — Kfar Milki and Kfar Kila, about eight kilometres northeast of Sidon, provincial capital of South Lebanon.

Reporters who toured Kfar Hatta said shell holes and bullet scars marked almost every house in the village of 2,000 inhabitants. Broken power cables dangled on smoldering cars.

Amal's military commander in Kfar Hatta, Mashour Ghossein, told reporters: "We will stop fighting only when we regain every inch of territory seized by Hizbullah yesterday (Saturday)."

The four embattled villages sit atop a chain of strategic hills that control the main supply routes to Hizbullah's strongholds further south in the townships of Jbeil, 'Ain Boushar and Jarjou.

These Shi'ite-populated towns have long been used by Hizbullah guerrillas as launching pads for attacks against the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army militia in Israel's self-designated "security zone."

Amal opposes guerrilla warfare against Israel on grounds it provokes reprisals against the predominantly Shi'ite south,

Fahd, Isa discuss dispute

BAHRAIN (R) — The emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Isa Ben Salman Al Khalifa, and Saudi Arabia's King Fahd held talks Sunday attended by large official delegations from both countries, Bahrain radio said.

Diplomats said the talks — attended by Bahrain's prime minister, crown prince, foreign and interior ministers — were aimed at resolving the country's longstanding territorial dispute with Qatar.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal Sunday joined the visiting Saudi delegation, which includes Oil Minister Hisham Naser and King Fahd's son Prince Abdul Aziz.

King Fahd arrived in Bahrain Saturday, two days after the annual summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and in the wake of an announcement that Saudi Arabia and Oman had agreed on a clear demarcation of their borders.

The Bahrain-based Gulf news agency said King Fahd left for Riyadh after talks with Sheikh Isa on "warm brotherly relations" between the two countries, developments in Gulf and Arab arenas, GCC issues and other topics of mutual interest.

King sends message to Iraqi leader

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday paid a brief visit to Baghdad and conveyed a verbal message from His Majesty King Hussein to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein "in the context of consultations and coordination between the two leaders on regional and international issues," the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

A Jordanian official quoted by Reuters said the King's message dealt with Middle East developments, primarily issues related to the Palestinian cause."

The Crown Prince, who returned to Amman Sunday evening, was quoted by Petra upon his departure for Baghdad as saying

that he would brief the president on the outcome of his tour of a number of European capitals and the United States.

Jordan, the Crown Prince said, was making preparations for hosting a summit meeting by the leaders of the four-member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) in February. This was also discussed by Prince Hassan with the Iraqi

leader during the visit.

The ACC, which was launched last February, groups Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and North Yemen.

Prince Hassan said Jordan and Iraq were maintaining very strong brotherly relations within the ACC context. Jordan, he added, looks to Iraq and Iraq's strength as serving as a basis for collective Arab action.

Ceausescu loyalists fight for their lives in Bucharest

VIENNA (R) — Secret police units loyal to ousted Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu fought for their lives in Bucharest Sunday as church bells rang out across the capital to celebrate Christmas.

But there were signs that Ceausescu loyalists were starting to surrender in the western city of Timisoara, birthplace of the week-old national revolt in which the final death toll could run into thousands.

The National Salvation Front, which is leading the revolution, demanded an immediate ceasefire and said all but army troops must hand in their weapons by Monday evening.

In Budapest, the Hungarian Defence Ministry said pro-reform forces planned to launch an all-out attack within a few days to snuff out all Ceausescu loyalists.

But Bucharest Radio said army units, who rained tank and machine-gun fire on loyalists pinned down in apartment blocks in the capital, controlled every strategic point in the country.

Romanian army sources said there appeared to be about 3,000 well-armed secret police troops fighting the new revolutionary government around the country, more than half in the capital.

Lieutenant Colonel Georges Ionescu told Reuters the secret police fighters were putting up stronger resistance than had been expected.

The secret police have one advantage over the army in that they were specially trained for street and house to house fighting," one Western military attaché said.

But Yugoslavia's Tanjug news agency said Ceausescu loyalists had begun surrendering in Timisoara.

The National Salvation Front, meanwhile, appealed for an immediate end to revenge killings which it said had reached alarming proportions.

The front said all those outside the army, which is now fighting with the pro-reform group, should hand in their weapons by 1500 GMT Christmas day.

Ion Iliescu, president of the front which has been acting as an interim government since Ceausescu was ousted on Friday, made the appeal on Bucharest television and radio.

Despite the bloodshed, thousands of Romanians gathered on Bucharest's University Square with the presidential palace and the Communist Party central committee building.

The fighting was concentrated mainly on Otopeni airport, 20 kilometres from the city centre, the television station and the central square with the presidential palace and the Communist Party central committee building.

On Saturday, Muslim fundamentalists burned trees and hurled stones in Bethlehem, prompting border police to close shops and clear the streets of everyone except tourists.

Elsewhere in the occupied lands, 14 Palestinians were wounded in clashes with Israeli soldiers.

Near the Al Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest site, Tutu bowed his head in a moment of silent prayer at a stone platform built in memory of the Palestinians killed by Israeli-supported militiamen in 1982 at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps near Beirut.

"We support the struggle of the Palestinian people in their longing for statehood," he said.

Romanian protesters burn the photo of deposed leader Nicolae Ceausescu

alone.

Hungary said it was reinforcing its border with Romania to prevent incidents involving Ceausescu loyalists seeking to escape across Hungarian territory.

In Moscow, Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev appeared to rule out Soviet military intervention, saying the leader of the pro-reform Romanian armed forces had announced that there was no need for foreign help.

The United States and France said they supported the front as the legitimate government of Romania.

Romania, which last week gave a red carpet welcome to Ceausescu, expressed support Sunday for the popular uprising which toppled the Romanian leader.

The Swiss government, meanwhile, has ordered a freeze on any assets Ceausescu might have in Swiss banks, the Justice Ministry said.

The National Salvation Front

Arafat, Mubarak hold talks

CAIRO (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat held talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo Sunday on plans for preliminary Middle East peace talks in Washington.

Mubarak, who is mediating between the PLO and Israel, received Arafat at his residence.

Journalists were kept well away from the residence, but officials said the talks focused on Washington's offer to hold tripartite negotiations next month with Egypt and Israel.

"Our talks with the PLO are... to prepare for the next step," an Egyptian Foreign Ministry source told Reuters.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has proposed meeting the Israeli and Egyptian foreign ministers in Washington to thrash out terms for peace.

Israel and Egypt have both been in touch with Washington in the past few days "to set the ground for the meeting and the issues to be discussed," the source said.

The PLO says it must have the final say on the composition of any Palestinian negotiating team, while Israel says the PLO can have no role in peace talks.

Arafat was met at Cairo airport by Osama Al Bazz, Mubarak's top political adviser.

the first signs of people trying to put their lives together after the invasion. At a few stores open Saturday, long lines of shoppers were guarded by American troops.

Murphy said engagement by U.S. troops in the city had declined.

"Panamanians are arming themselves and setting up roadblocks around their communities," he said. "It's better than us doing it for them. Small groups of pro-Noriega forces will likely continue to oppose U.S. forces using hit-and-run tactics."

"Casualties continue to be light, considering the widespread threat and nature of urban combat," he said.

At a gas station in the El Dorado neighbourhood of Panama City, groups of Panama Defence Forces (PDF) soldiers were captured by local people and turned over to U.S. forces in small groups, the Southern Command said.

"We're gaining control," said Colonel James Swank of the Southern Command. "That's true all over the city. I'm not going to say we're under control. We're gaining control."

U.S. forces invaded Panama early Wednesday in an effort to protect Americans, restore democracy and oust Noriega, who is wanted in the United States on drug trafficking charges. The wily general has not been found despite a \$1 million reward for his capture.

City streets remained strewn with rubbish after days of extensive looting. But more stores and gas stations reopened Sunday in

A key military commander charged with drug smuggling along with Noriega has pledged loyalty to the new government and said he will submit himself to U.S. military authorities.

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Egypt, Syria to mend schism

CAIRO (R) — Old rival Egypt and Syria are poised to resume relations, mending a decade-old fracture in Arab ranks, diplomats and political analysts said Sunday.

"Both countries have good reason to bury the hatchet," said one Western envoy. "But differences remain to be sorted out."

Egyptian presidential sources said Saturday that Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak and Syria's President Hafez Al Assad would meet soon and announced a resumption of relations.

Analysts said Syria now felt uncomfortably isolated. It was under pressure over its role in Lebanon's civil war while its uncompromising diplomacy had been partially eclipsed by the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories.

"Egypt knows any Middle East settlement actively opposed by Syria is worthless," said the envoy. "While Damascus knows its voice carries little weight if it stays the odd man out."

Syria and Libya are the only Arab states to have held out against restoring ties with Cairo, severed because of Egypt's 1979 treaty with Israel.



Hosni Mubarak



Hafez Al Assad

tions, replied that it did.

Mubarak, playing the role of arbiter in regional crises and disputes, has worked hard to reintegrate Egypt into the Arab mainstream while retaining ties with Israel.

The analysts said it would be some time before Syrian and Egyptian leaders could reconcile differing views towards current U.S.-sponsored proposals for Israeli-Palestinian talks.

Syria wants a comprehensive Middle East solution arranged by an international peace conference and an Israeli withdrawal from all Arab lands occupied in war.

It opposes Israeli attempts to lure Arab states into separate negotiations and is critical of Israel's offer of limited self-rule to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank.

For its part, Egypt has offered to host the first-ever Palestinian-Israeli dialogue and is trying to narrow differences between the two sides by supporting a U.S. proposal for preparatory Israeli-Egyptian talks in Washington.

Of the four Arab states bordering Israel, Syria and Egypt possess the most powerful armed forces.

Ever since a brief union between the two states from February 1958 to September 1961 ended in acrimony, they have had a love-hate relationship.

While their forces joined in battle against Israel in 1973, Syria felt it had been misled by Egypt's limited objectives and relations sank to an all-time low with the subsequent signing of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty.



V-FOR-VICTORY: Young Palestinian boys in Ramallah cover their faces with their shirts and make "V" signs while another boy hurls a stone and a tire burns in the background.

2 more Sudanese convicted of bid to smuggle currency

KHARTOUM (AP) — A special military court has convicted two more Sudanese civilians of attempting to smuggle foreign currency out of the country, a crime that carries the death penalty.

The court said a verdict was to be issued later.

On death row is Muzammil Mohamad Hussein, convicted of leading a one week strike by physicians last month. The strike was in protest over the detention of colleagues in military jails and the dismissal of physicians from government posts.

A military court sentenced Hussein last week.

A 15-man military junta headed by Omar Ahmad Hassan Al Bashir overthrew the civilian government of Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi in a bloodless coup last June.

Magdi Mahgoub Mohammad Ahmad was hanged last weekend after being convicted by a milit-

UAE gets 13 French jet fighters

ABU DHABI (R) — France delivered 13 Mirage 2000 jet fighters to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this month as the first part of a \$2.3 billion deal for 36 of the planes. Western diplomats said Sunday.

The UAE said earlier it had received part of the long-delayed order during a visit this month by French Defence Minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement, but did not say how many.

The diplomats said the UAE would be receiving another plane almost every month until the full order was complete by the end of 1991.

The deal was signed in 1986 but held up after the UAE asked for the planes to be fitted with U.S. Sidewinder missiles. The diplomats said France agreed to make technical modifications to fit the missiles.

France planned to increase its oil imports from the UAE, the diplomats added. They were unsure if oil would help finance the Mirage deal.

Western defence analysts previously put the UAE airforce at 40 combat aircraft and 25 helicopters.

any court of black-marketeering in foreign currency.

Another Sudanese civilian, Saeed Mohammed Jaballa, was hanged along with Ahmad at the same prison Sunday. Jaballa was convicted of drug trafficking.

Ahmad was sentenced to death early this month along with Ali Beshr Mariondi, also convicted of the same charge but no date for his execution was announced yet.

U.S. officials said in Washington they had been urging Sudan to repeal the death sentences.

"We have discussed these cases with the government of Sudan in private diplomatic channels and we continue to do so," said an official at the U.S. State Department.

U.S. law mandates cutting of aid to countries whose democratic government have been overthrown, but the U.S. administration has withheld such action in hopes the new rulers would act to resolve the country's civil war and human rights problems.

Amnesty International said in a report last week that murder and torture continue in Sudan since the military takeover.

Talks between rebels in south Sudan and the central government in Khartoum collapsed earlier this month. The rebels have been fighting since 1983 for greater autonomy.

The military tribunal said Saturday it had found Gergis Butrus, an assistant pilot with the Sudan Airways, and Mobahammad Al Rashid, a driver at Khartoum.

17 hanged in Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — Seventeen alleged drug traffickers, including an Iranian woman and an Indian national, were hanged Sunday in three Iranian cities.

Teheran Radio, monitored in Nicosia, said the defendants had been tried and sentenced by Islamic courts for "smuggling and peddling" 1,000 kilogrammes of hashish, opium and heroin. Light arms and ammunition were found in their possession, it said.

The broadcast said those hanged included a woman and an Indian national. Seven were hanged in Teheran, five in Mashhad and five in Kerman, it said.

In a separate report, the radio said 300 drug smugglers and more than 350 addicts were arrested in a 24-hour crackdown that ended Sunday morning.

airport, guilty of attempting to illegally take amounts of different currencies out of the country but deferred issuing a sentence until Sunday.

Authorities said Butros was arrested while he was about to embark on a passenger plane in possession of amounts of foreign currencies. They said Rashid handed the money over to the assistant pilot at the airport.

The court said the acts committed by Butros and Rashid constituted subversion of the Sudanese economy. No defense counsel is allowed in military tribunals.

Supplies reach Malakal

For the first time since February, a large convoy carrying consumer goods had reached the southern town of Malakal whose inhabitants are facing acute shortages of food, the Sudan News Agency reported Sunday.

The convoy's military escort repelled an attack by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) on the barges but there were no casualties reported on either side, SUNA added.

The agency said jubilant inhabitants of Malakal welcomed the barge convoy which carried 45,000 tons of sorghum, sugar, cooking oil and laundry soap.

Malakal is capital of the southern Upper Nile region. It is 680 kilometres south of Khartoum.

The last commercial barge convoy reaching Malakal was last February.

Iran says it has arrested thousands of smugglers and pushers and executed at least 1,000 of them since authorities launched a nationwide anti-narcotics campaign last year.

But the London-based Amnesty International, which monitors human rights violations worldwide, has said many political prisoners were among those executed.

In Iran, drug smuggling is punishable by death. Under a law passed by parliament a year ago, anyone caught in the possession of even small quantities of narcotics faces the death sentence.

Official reports say one million people of the total population of 50 million are involved in drug abuse. Other unofficial estimates say the figure is double that.

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Chadli Benjedid
Algerian party to elect new politburo

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SANA (R) — Tens of thousands of North Yemenis demonstrated Sunday in support of speedier measures to merge their country and South Yemen, Radio Sanaa reported.

North Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh told the crowd:

"We promise you that the leadership in the two sectors of Yemen will work as one team. There will be no difference after today."

"Sanaa and Aden have met and will embrace each other for ever. That is our historic aim," said Ali Salim Al Baidh, secretary-general of South Yemen's ruling Socialist Party.

Baidh, accompanied by a large delegation including Aden's in-

terior and oil ministers, arrived in Sanaa earlier to pursue negotiations with Saleh on implementing the unity agreement.

The draft constitution is to be submitted to the two parliaments for approval with six months,

followed by a referendum in a further six months to endorse it.

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Pope sends message of peace to Lebanon

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope John Paul II called Christmas Eve a "wait full of hope" as he blessed a giant Christmas tree and creche in St. Peter's Square.

The Pope also Sunday sent a message addressed to all Lebanese in whatever community saying the country was constantly in his thoughts.

John Paul, who later was to celebrate midnight mass in St. Peter's Basilica, greeted about 10,000 pilgrims and tourists gathered for his Sunday noon blessing.

The Pope spoke from his apartment window, looking out on a 30-metre-high tree from Amman and a Nativity scene with life-size figures in the centre of the square.

He said Christmas Eve was a "wait full of hope as we prepare to welcome Christ who comes to us as saviour of the world."

Wars, rivalries, arrogance and selfishness were obstacles to peace, the Pope said, but "the optimism of hope is of hope."

The Vatican said the Pope's mid-night mass was to be televised to about 50 nations. These include, for the first time, East Germany, a sign of vastly improved relations between the Vatican and Soviet bloc countries.

On Christmas Day, the Pope is to celebrate another mass in St. Peter's and then deliver his traditional message "urbi et orbi" (Latin for "to the city of Rome") and the world."

John Paul had met Saturday with an Arab League delegation seeking to mediate an end to the Lebanese crisis. A week ago, the Pope was criticised by Lebanese leftists for failing to receive the mediators.

In his message Sunday, sent to Maronite Catholic Patriarch Nasrallah Pierre Steil, the Pope expressed his support for efforts to overcome the "grave problems that are delaying the return to normalcy songbi by all Lebanese."

The Pope has repeatedly condemned fighting this year between mostly Christian troops and Syrian and allied forces which has killed hundreds of people and has appealed to all sides to seek a negotiated settlement.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

OIC talks in Tehran

ABU DHABI (R) — The Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) will meet in Tehran Tuesday to discuss human rights, WAM news agency said Sunday.

The 44-nation group will meet for three days to debate an Islamic human rights document, the official agency of the United Arab Emirates said. Earlier this year, Iran attacked the OIC for not supporting the religious decree ordering the death of British author Salman Rushdie for alleged blasphemy in "the Satanic Verses."

4 killed in Turkish crash

ANKARA (R) — Four Turkish railwaymen were killed Sunday when a passenger train rammed into a freight train which had stalled on a single track with engine failure, the semi-official Anatolian news agency said. Three people were injured and six carriages were smashed in the accident near Pozanti in southern Adana province, southeast of Ankara.

Waite's brother hopeful

LONDON (AP) — David Waite said Sunday he believes there is "a lot of hope" now for the eventual release of his brother, Terry, and other hostages in Lebanon because of events this year in Britain, Iran and the United States.

He said he had been encouraged by the election of a new American president and a letter he received recently from British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd which outlined an avenue for improved Anglo-Iranian relations. "I felt it was quite an important letter because it was saying in fact that as long as Iran was ready to use her influence to secure the release of Terry and the other hostages, Britain would look to improve their relationships with Iran," Waite said in a British

HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Hashemite Medical Centre 8181352

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amm. 6442516

Romanians in Jordan rally behind revolt

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Over 100 peaceful demonstrators carried candles and chanted Romanian songs to express their support for the Romanian revolution and their solidarity with the National Salvation Front, which took over after a people's revolt toppled hardline Communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu this week.

The Romanian community in Jordan, which numbers over 700 Romanians, mostly women, also expressed its sorrow at the large number of deaths during the revolution which started in earnest Friday.

"We decided to meet here to burn candles for the people who died there, especially the children," Stela Al Sabagh, a Romanian native married to a Jordanian, told the Jordan Times outside the Romanian embassy in Jabal Luweibdeh.

Sabagh also said that Romanians living in Jordan were trying to find a way to help their compatriots. "Maybe we can deliver blood or money... we are proud of our people," she said.

Romania's ambassador to Jordan, Dimitrie Stanescu, joined the demonstrators in

their celebrations and pledged his allegiance to the National Salvation Front. He said that Romania was now "living a historical moment. The Ceausescu gang, who lead the country to disaster, has been eliminated from power."

He told the Jordan Times in a brief interview at the foot-steps of the embassy that the Foreign Ministry in Bucharest had supported the revolution and expressed its support for the National Salvation Front.

"Our Foreign Ministry has already sent a message to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan expressing its firm decision to act for the implementation of the front's policy... in a manner which would establish and affirm the dignity and the aspiration of freedom, friendship, peace and international understanding," the ambassador said.

Several women among the demonstrators wept openly as speeches were made denouncing of Ceausescu and praising the Romanian people. Almost of the women and men interviewed said they were very surprised that there was a revolution at all.

"I personally thought they were cowards because they were always silent... but now... now I know that they



Members of the Romanian community living in Jordan stage a demonstration in Amman Sunday

are very brave people," Sabagh said.

One woman maintained that she had expected change in Romania and said that she was surprised at the timing of the revolution.

"It came very quickly, I couldn't believe it."

Asked whether the embassy expected the revolution, Stanescu evaded giving a direct answer. "The evolution of any society requires change and development and this is what

happened in Romania," he said.

The Romanian crowd, joined by Jordanians who have studied in the East European country, carried banners hailing Romania's freedom and condemning Ceausescu as "a kid's killer."

There are more than 6,000 Jordanians who attended University in Romania since 1974.

The new programme of the Romanian government covers a series of measures aimed at assuring the populations with public and political freedoms as well securing basic services and food for the people of Romania.

The programme includes proposals to abolish the leading role of a single party and the establishment of a pluralist democratic system of government, the organisation of a free elections in the month of April, and the separation of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities.

300 Palestinian pilgrims en route to Saudi Arabia

SOUTH SHUNEH (J.T.) A group of 340 Muslims from Palestinian territory occupied by Israel since 1948 Sunday arrived at South Shuneh in the Jordan Valley after crossing into Jordan via the King Hussein Bridge on their way to Saudi Arabia to perform the Umra pilgrimage in Mecca and Medina.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, which takes charge of pilgrimage affairs, organised a celebration here to welcome the pilgrims. Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Faqih pledged to provide the pilgrims with all essential facilities and services. He said that arrangements would be made to transport the pilgrims in air-coo-

ditioned buses to Saudi Arabia, where the ministry has made arrangements for their accommodation.

One of the pilgrims delivered a speech on the occasion expressing appreciation to Jordan for its help and assistance.

Attending the celebration were senior officials, including the Balqa governor and officials from the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

The ministry has provided facilities at a pilgrims camp in the Jordan Valley for the convenience of the pilgrims during the pilgrimage season when they cross into Jordan or when they are on their way back home.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

INDUSTRIALISTS CONFERENCE: Secretary-General of the Amman-based Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) Hassan Ibrahim is to participate in a conference for industrialists in the Arab Gulf states due to open in Muscat, Oman, Tuesday. He will later discuss with United Arab Emirates officials issues pertaining to the implementation of the CEAU's resolutions and the council's 1990 programmes. (Petra)

AGRICULTURAL LOANS: The Irbid branch of the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) gave loans totalling JD 317,000 to farmers in the Irbid governorate during 1989, according to the branch's director, Mohammad Shboul. He said that 105 local farmers benefited from the loans and spent the money on planting fruit trees, reclaiming lands and purchasing farm equipment. (Petra)

FOOD SUPPLIES DESTROYED: The department of supply in Qaser District has destroyed an unspecified amount of food supplies found unfit for human consumption. The department team of officials toured stores and warehouses where they confiscated the food supplies that were destroyed. (Petra)

KNITTING COURSE GRADUATES: A total of 35 women participants in a knitting training course organised by Yarmouk University ended their training and graduated Sunday. The participants who took the two-and-a-half month course displayed their work at an exhibition organised at the university's campus. (Petra)

KARAK COOPERATIVES STUDY: The cooperatives department in Karak Governorate has prepared a detailed study on the work and activities of cooperatives in the Karak region. The study points out the various obstacles that they encounter. According to the department's director, Firdiy Rababdi, the study covered the work of the cooperatives since 1952 giving particulars about the number of agricultural projects they executed and their contributions to development. (Petra)

CHARITY BAZAAR: The faculty of nursing at the University of Jordan organised a charity bazaar Sunday displaying handicrafts and knitwear. The proceeds will benefit patients at the National Mental Hospital in Fuheis. (Petra)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- * An art exhibition by artists from Jordan and other Arab countries at Al Wasil Gallery, Plaza Hotel.
- * The youth art exhibition at the Spanish Cultural Centre.
- * An exhibition entitled "The Blue Rider" at the Yarmouk University.
- * A plastic art exhibition by Arif Al Hamed and Ibrahim Nofal at the University of Jordan.
- * An exhibition on public education at the Soviet Cultural Centre.
- * The Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) youths art exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- * A Soviet documentary film entitled "The Map of the Great Homeland" at the Soviet Cultural Centre — 5:30 p.m.

Housing talks set for Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — Ministers of housing and reconstruction of the four members of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) will open their third meeting in Amman Jan. 10 to discuss issues pertaining to the implementation of an ACC agreement on housing.

A spokesman for the Housing Corporation said that the agreement was endorsed by the ACC's follow-up committee, between Jan. 6 and 9.

He said that the four countries had already set up technical committees to prepare the necessary mechanism for its implementation. The agreement calls for unification of standards and specification for housing purposes and streamlining organisational plans by the four countries in housing affairs, as well as the establishment of a data bank to provide information on housing and reconstruction.

According to the spokesman, the agreement also provides for the unification of terms and conditions include in contracts for engineering projects and contractors' work, as well as unification of legislations and an exchange of visits and coordination in international conferences.

The ministerial meeting will be preceded by a meeting by the ACC's follow-up committee, between Jan. 6 and 9.

AYF meeting reviews Jordan paper

AMMAN (J.T.) — Participants in an Arab Youth Forum (AYF) meeting which started here Saturday reviewed a working paper by Jordanian participants entitled "Scientific Coordination in Arab Cooperation Council (ACC)."

The participants, all from the ACC, which groups Jordan, Iraq, North Yemen and Egypt, discussed the paper, which calls for pooling scientific potentials of the

four countries through the help of researchers and scientists and dwell in particular on means of ensuring food security for the Arab World.

Yarmouk University President Ali Mahafta delivered a lecture to the audience on the Great Arab Revolt and its causes and results.

Later the participants visited the University of Jordan and

toured a number of departments.

During their week-long meetings in Amman, the participants will make trips to several archaeological and historical sites in the Kingdom and will meet with officials and hold seminars.

The AYF was established in June 1988 at the request of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to open the door for Arab youth to discuss pan-Arab affairs.

Driving without a licence — a risk with high price

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — People seem to get a kick out of taking risks and trying to evade the punishments of doing so. Driving without a licence is definitely one of these chances that young Jordanians enjoy taking. It is a common remark among this category of "fun-loving" citizens to admit that they "get a thrill out of driving without a licence while trying to look as cool as possible when cruising past traffic policemen so as not to be spotted and stopped."

But no matter how much "fun" one derives out of it, driving without a licence is a violation of the law of the first degree and the punishment is either jail for no less than seven days and not more than three months, or a minimum fine of JD 50 and a maximum of JD 200, or the driver may be fined and jailed, according to the vehicle and drivers licensing department deputy director, Abdul Salam Al Ja'afreh.

"If a driver is sentenced to jail, the verdict can be changed into a fine only in cases where the court sees appropriate and provided that the fine amount is not less than JD 200," Al Ja'afreh told the Jordan Times.

One of the first things that happen to most licenceless drivers who end up in detention is a complete shaving of their head, according to several who were "unfortunate" to have been caught.

According to Al Ja'afreh, in order to avoid such "inconveniences" all that a person has to do is apply for a driver's licence, which he/she can obtain through a series of procedures.

First, the applicant should be 18 or above. He or she should present a certificate

from one of the training schools confirming that the person took a training course in driving of at least 15 hours of practical driving and 20 hours of theoretical training.

"If a person already knows how to drive, he/she must perform an evaluation test at one of the training centres," Al Ja'afreh said. But if the person fails he/she has to undergo 40 hours of practical driving before being allowed to try again.

The procedures involve a medical check-up and a written test on signals, in which the applicant should secure at least 85 points out of a possible 100. Then a date is set for the actual driving test, normally in about 10 days from the date of the signals test.

If he/she does not pass the practical test, the person is given another chance after 30 days.

The medical examination involves tests of eyesight, movement of the neck and limbs and a psychological test.

A fee of JD 1.20 is the charge for the medical test, JD 2.20 for the signals test, JD 5.30 for the driving test and 15 fils for stamps. Then comes the actual licence fee.

"If the licence is issued for

one year, the fee is JD 3.45, but if it is for 10 years, the fee is then JD 23.25," Al Ja'afreh explained.

Foreigners residing in Jordan who wish to obtain driving licences have to present a good conduct certificate, a residence permit and documents proving car ownership. Then they can go through the regular procedures.

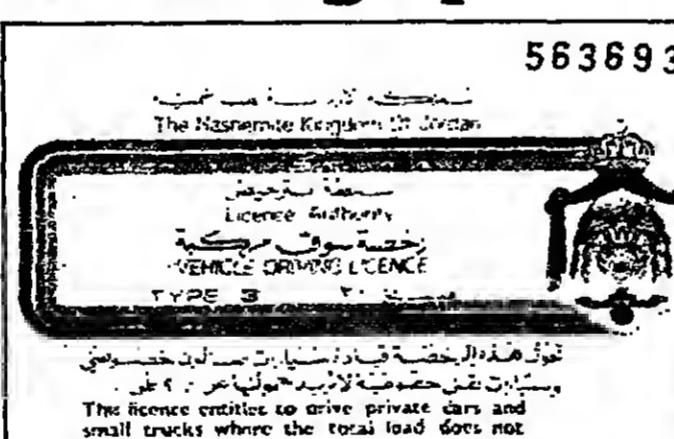
Licences issued to foreigners are usually valid only up to the date of his/her residence permit, Al Ja'afreh said.

If and when a person loses the driving licence, he/she has to give in a statement on where and how it was lost and then sign a declaration by which he/she is held responsible for the information given in the statement.

The person is then given a permit that allows him/her to drive during the search for the licence. "First of all we check with the highway patrols and the traffic department to make sure that they have not impounded the licence in question," Al Ja'afreh said.

If the licence is not found in a month's time, a new one is issued after the person pays a fee of JD 10, he said.

Driving without a licence — a risk with high price



House hails intifada, hits U.S. invasion of Panama

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday saluted the Arab people of Palestine on the eve of Christmas and New Year and expressed hope that the ongoing uprising will help the Palestinian people regain their freedom and establish an independent state on Palestinian soil under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, which said the House strongly denounced the United States intervention in Panama and demanded an immediate withdrawal of American troops from Panamanian territory. It also called for moves to be made to stop the emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries to occupied Palestine.

Minister Mudar Badran announced that ministries and various official and government departments will no longer request approval from or take the views of security services about the employment of any citizens to fill any positions in these departments. Petra quoted Badran as saying that in response to the deputies' request he took up the subject with the Council of Ministers at Saturday's session, which approved the request. It said that the new arrangement would take immediate effect.

Badran said the government was now conducting a careful study on each case involving detained or imprisoned persons and might need some time to take decisions. The prime minister said there were some people de-

tained or convicted because of violations of the law and not because of political affiliations.

"I am not aware of any case of political detainees held by the security departments, which recently released detainees. But I will follow up the case of any name provided by the House as part of the commitment to the government's policy presented to Parliament," Badran added.

At Sunday's session, which was attended by Cabinet members, the House referred a number of draft laws and amendments of laws to concerned Parliament committees, which conducted a detailed discussion on some of them, according to Petra.

The Prime Minister himself took part in discussions and pointed out that some of the laws were enacted before the election of Parliament Nov. 8, and others were temporary laws which have already been enforced.

Also at Sunday's session, the House members elected members to the committees on public freedoms, agricultural affairs, education, health and environmental safety, Palestine and the occupied territories affairs and the rural and badia affairs.

Masri: U.S. violated international principles

By Nermene Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The condemnation issued Sunday by the Lower House of Parliament of the American invasion of Panama is based on the adherence by the Jordanian parliament to international norms and practices, according to deputy Tamer Al Masri, who tabled the proposal at the House.

The House position was manifested in telegrams it sent to United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and U.S. President George Bush condemning the "U.S. military intervention in Panama, especially that Panama is an independent country and a member of the United Nations."

The American action, according to the one page telegram, "violates international laws and the dignity of the U.N." The House called for

"the immediate withdrawal of American troops from Panama."

Masri, who made the proposal five minutes into the seventh regular session of the house, told the Jordan Times that "the principle of (military) interventions was wrong."

"We know who (Manuel Antonio) Noriega is," Masri said. "He is a bum, but we are not defending the man, we are defending international principles," Masri said.

According to Masri, who served as Jordan's foreign minister under two different prime ministers, "the U.S. cannot keep adopting unilateral actions. It hit Libya (in 1983) and now it has attacked Panama. This cannot continue."

Masri believes that the American intervention in South America comes as part of a larger policy to "rearrange its affairs in the countries

around it now that it's influence in Europe has diminished in face of Western European unity."

"I personally think that we will now start seeing changes in South America, triggered by the U.S., to adapt to the United States' general policies," Masri said.

The resolution tabled by Masri was adopted unanimously but not before Ahmad Oweid Al Abbadi, a deputy from Amman, interjected: "What does Jordan have to do with Panama?" But, his remark was brushed aside by other deputies.

The Jordanian condemnation of the American action in Panama was mostly in line with the positions by the international community. However, the U.S., France and Britain Saturday vetoed a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning the action.

AMMAN (J.T.) — Since its creation in Jordan in 1988 the Popular Committee for Supporting the Palestinian Intifada collected JD 2.3 million in donations and most of the amount has reached families of martyrs in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip and the committee is doubling its efforts to raise additional funds, according to Dr. Mamdon Abbadi, the committee's secretary general.

The number of martyrs and JD 200 each to the families of the wounded in the uprising. Abbadi, who is also president of the Jordan Medical Association (JMA), said that doctors in the occupied West Bank were being assisted by JMA. There are about 1,500 Arab doctors in the occupied West Bank and they are all members of the JMA and committed to its laws and

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Gloomy Christmas

ONCE AGAIN it is Christmas Day and Bethlehem and the rest of the Holy Land are still deprived of the joys and hopes of the holy day. For how long can Christianity endure the Israeli sacrilegious interferences with the normal celebration and enjoyment of one of the holiest days in the Christian calendar? It must be uppermost on the minds of all the true faithfuls. What worse deed can Israel perform to Christians everywhere than to continue its occupation and subjugation of the city of Bethlehem and the other holy places in Palestine? Yet the agony and suffering of the Holy Land continue unabated year in and year out. And when the city of Beit Sahour rebelled a few weeks ago against payment of taxes to Israel which were intended to perpetuate the Zionist state's oppression and occupation of the Holy Land, the international community including the Christian World looked with admiration but without action.

The Palestinian people, especially the Christians, among them, look for help and rescue from the rest of the Christians of the world to liberate them from Israeli occupation and suppression. And this Christmas Day offers another occasion for Palestinian prayer that after all these past agonising years the Christian community in the four corners of the world will take up the struggle of their fellow people in the Holy Land and start exerting pressure on their governments to do something honourable to end the continued Israeli occupation of Bethlehem and Jerusalem and the rest of the cities and towns of Palestine. Meanwhile, mankind of all faiths shall continue to pray and hope for the day when peace and justice will reign supreme in Palestine, the land of Christ whose holy birthday the entire world celebrates today. Thus far every genuine and sincere effort made to resolve the Palestinian conflict was met with one Israeli stiff resistance or another. It is sad and unfortunate to see every peace initiative that goes back to more than twenty years being thwarted or derailed by Tel Aviv's overt or covert connivance. Even the most recent plan by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to bring the Palestinians and Israelis together is also heading for the same ritual bitter end before the very eyes of the international community. May then the occasion of Christmas this year serve as yet another fresh impetus to put new perspective and spirit into the hearts, minds and souls of the Israelis in order to begin the long journey of settling the Palestinian conflict on the basis of equity and justice.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Sunday hailed the open support for the Palestinian people and their uprising against Israeli occupation by Pope John Paul II and the South African black Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The paper said that the two leaders' statements on the eve of Christmas, manifested the world community's interest in the Palestinian cause and its open support for the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom. The paper said in reprisal for these pro-Palestinian statements, the Israelis have escalated their repression; and in Bethlehem they have turned out in force to suppress the spirit of Arab resistance. Israeli troops have closed down shops and fought battles against protesters in the Manger square in a bid to stifle the spirit of resistance in the town where Jesus Christ was born, the paper added. It said that regardless of these stepped up measures, the Arab youths in the city have maintained their struggle and continued to launch attacks on the occupation forces. Israel's acts of reprisal against the Arabs and its continued atrocities in Bethlehem, Beit Sahour and other towns can never put a stop to Arab resistance, the paper said. The Paper saluted the people of Palestine on the eve of Christmas Day.

The downfall of Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu is tackled by a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic paper. Mahmoud Al Kusawi noted that Ceausescu was the only leader who defied the feelings of the Arab World and the Soviet Union by refraining from severing ties with Israel following its 1967 aggression on the Arab countries. Furthermore, Ceausescu entered the Arab-Israeli conflict arena, displaying himself as a peace mediator, and eventually paved the way for the Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt, the writer notes. He says that following the Palestinian uprising no one heard Ceausescu's voice any more, as if he was not concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict any more or happy to see the Israeli put down the Palestinian revolt. On the domestic front, Ceausescu refused to give any freedom to his people like the other Eastern Bloc countries but was always willing to allow Romanian Jews to emigrate to Israel. The fall of the dictator, the friend of Israel, the writer concludes, should come as a bliss for the Arab countries and the Third World at large.

The rapprochement between Cairo and Damascus was discussed Sunday by Al Dustour Arabic daily which hailed a visit to Egypt by the Syrian vice president. The paper said that a healing of rifts between two Arab states and rapprochement between two capitals are bound to benefit the whole Arab nation, and enhance the struggle for unity. Solidarity among the Arab states is a national requirement for a solid and strong Arab stand which is badly needed in the light of the developments in the Middle East region and on the world scene, said the paper. Syria and Egypt which together fought side by side in the 1973 October war against the common enemy of the Arab World, can and must join forces again to pursue the struggle, leading to unity among Arabs and a liberation of occupied Arab lands, the paper continued. It expressed hope that another rapprochement will take place between Damascus and Baghdad so that the whole Arab nation will become united in the face of its common enemies.

White House, Kremlin in role reversal

By Walter R. Mears
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — There's something of a role reversal and, it seems, a rule reversal as well in the way the Kremlin and the White House are dealing with each other on the U.S. intervention in Panama.

Their words and contacts point to an effort on both sides to keep the episode from intruding on the thaw in East-West relations.

The Soviet Union denounced the U.S. military move, calling it an invasion and an act of aggression, but adding that a predictable response the observation that it will not necessarily become a problem issue between Moscow and Washington.

President George Bush sent a personal message to Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev on the military action he ordered early Wednesday against the Panamanian regime of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega.

He told a news conference Thursday that he needs to explain the operation to Gorbachev more fully.

"It's not altogether surprising that he doesn't understand some of the special arrangements we

United States has in Panama," the president said.

Bush said he had responded to provocations that included the killing of an unarmed U.S. Marine, the brutalising of U.S. citizens and the denial of office to a freely elected leader.

Given all that, he said, his message would be:

"Then, Mr. Gorbachev, please understand, this president is going to do something about it."

"So we have to explain," he said.

Secretary of State James A. Baker III said the critical Soviet statements were not unexpected, and that the initial comments may have been issued before the first Bush message reached Gorbachev.

Not that it would have made much difference. U.S. intervention, whatever the cause or justification, is guaranteed to produce critical reaction from Moscow, just as the United States has assailed Soviet moves in Afghanistan and elsewhere. Furthermore, Noriega has close ties with Cuba, the Soviet western hemisphere ally, and with the government in Nicaragua.

The United States must immediately stop its armed intervention in Panama," said Baker.

Intervention to keep the satellites in line was a Moscow habit during the height of the cold war. It happened then in East Germany, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, in Poland.

Gorbachev turned away from that posture. Indeed, while the Romanian government was trying to put down protests with force, the Soviet president said Wednesday.

intervention in Panama," said Vadim P. Perfiliev, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry in Moscow. A Tass commentary said the U.S. action encroaches on the progress attained elsewhere in world affairs.

But those comments were tempered by Perfiliev's observation that superpower relations have moved beyond the point at which any such episode, anywhere in the world, was deemed a matter of East-West confrontation.

The U.S. intervention comes as the Soviet Union watches barriers fall and governments turn from Communist dominance toward democracy and free market economic systems. Moscow once proclaimed a doctrine of limited sovereignty for the satellite states, insisting on its right to intervene against threats to their Communist regimes.

Intervention to keep the satellites in line was a Moscow habit during the height of the cold war. It happened then in East Germany, in Hungary, in Czechoslovakia, in Poland.

"Let me say that I think both the United States and the Soviet Union today are supporting democracy by staying out of countries and thus permitting democracy to proceed. In this one and very

day that changes in Eastern Europe should come "peacefully, without violating public order and the rights of citizens."

Moscow has not resisted the freedom movements that have changed the face of Eastern Europe.

Sen. Sam Nunn, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said it was unfortunate that the United States "was required to take these steps in Panama at a time when we are urging restraint on the part of the Soviet Union toward other nations and on the part of China toward the democratic aspirations of its own people."

Baker said the Soviet Union is supporting democracy through its forbearance, and argued the United States is doing so by doing the opposite in Panama, by intervening.

"Let me say that I think both the United States and the Soviet Union today are supporting democracy by staying out of countries and thus permitting democracy to proceed. In this one and very

unique instance, the United States did it by going to assist a democratically elected government against a dictator."

The Panama operation drew protests from most Latin American capitals, even from governments hostile to Noriega. He may be detested, but so is Yankee intervention.

Mexico, for example, said Panamanian problems must be resolved by the Panamanian people.

But they tried, and Noriega wouldn't let it happen, which is the Baker argument.

Noriega reneged on this year's elections because he was losing, and installed his proxies to govern. The Organization of American States (OAS) tried to talk him into yielding power to an elected government. Five times its emissaries went to Panama City on that futile mission.

Latin American states voted at the OAS Friday for a resolution assailing "the military intervention in Panama," a measure that gained something in the translation.

The English language version expressed regret, the Spanish translation deplored the opera-

tion.

The OAS urged an immediate end to the fighting and said American troops should be withdrawn. The vote was 20 to 1. Only the U.S. delegate voted no.

The Latin protests inevitable. And despite the easing of East-West tensions, Soviet officials and commentators weren't about to let Washington off the hook easily.

Georgi Arbatov, a Soviet expert on U.S. affairs, called the operation a return to gunboat diplomacy and said it could strengthen hardliners opposed to arms reductions.

He also said in an ABC-TV interview that Noriega is a problem the United States created for itself, by training him and once having him on the CIA payroll.

For all of that, there remains the possibility that the Panama precedent could be argued in connection with future Soviet intervention, if it comes to that, in a place like Lithuania. That Baltic state has been part of the Soviet Union since 1940. An independence movement there is strong and gaining despite Kremlin warnings that it will come grief and great trouble.

U.S. bungles political aspect of Panama invasion

By Alan Elsner
Reuter

WASHINGTON — The United States may have bungled the political management of its invasion of Panama and now faces the danger of a backlash at home and abroad, political analysts said.

"The Bush administration has not done a good job in making its case. It keeps shifting the emphasis and this will have dwindling returns even in the United States," said law professor and Latin America expert Robert Goldman who was initially highly supportive of the intervention.

According to analysts, the U.S.-installed government of Guillermo Endara would be well-advised to commit itself to elections within a year to gain the international legitimacy it has so far failed to win.

"If enough U.S. troops come back from Panama in body bags, what rally-round-the-flag Americans now consider a justified operation might soon backfire...at home as well as in the hemisphere," said New York Times columnist Tom Wicker.

He said sentiment against the intervention would sharpen if U.S. troops found themselves having to combat Noriega-led guerrilla operations.

In addition, the Bush administration appeared to have misjudged the strength of world condemnation. Although Secretary of State James Baker said several governments had expressed private support for the inva-

sion, account the civil disorder that ensued after the invasion, was slow to try to re-establish law and order showing an apparent unconcern for Panamanian property and mismanaged public relations aspects of the operation.

For instance, President George Bush gave a news conference on national television at the same time as the first bodies of U.S. servicemen killed in the invasion were arriving home.

The networks split their television screens, showing Bush exchanging jokes with the White House press corps on one side and coffins draped in flags being unloaded from planes on the other.

"If enough U.S. troops come back from Panama in body bags, what rally-round-the-flag Americans now consider a justified operation might soon backfire...at home as well as in the hemisphere," said New York Times columnist Tom Wicker.

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sion, in only British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has endorsed it publicly.

Latin American public outrage was anticipated but usually friendly neutral nations like Finland and Sweden and even allies like France have joined the chorus of disapproval and not one government has recognised Endara.

The fact that Endara was sworn in at a U.S. military base confirmed him as a "Yankee" stooge

in the eyes of many in Latin America and he was slow to make his presence felt in Panama.

"It looked like the Endara people were skulking into the country. This was not well-judged politically," said Goldman.

Analysts said reaction may have been more negative because of a perception that the days when superpowers sent troops into neighbouring countries were over.

Moscow grabbed the opportunity to draw the contrast between its own behaviour in Eastern Europe and the U.S. invasion.

Baker's statement that Moscow was supporting democracy by staying out of other countries while the United States did it by going in struck a false note, analysts said.

In Congress, backing for the operation was wide but not deep with several legislators issuing carefully worded but qualified expressions of support.

House Speaker Thomas Foley said the operation raised serious questions. "Do you send 24,000 troops to arrest somebody?" he asked.

Kohl tries to balance hopes for unity with international jitters

By Terrence Petty
Associated Press

BONN — Chancellor Helmut Kohl is riding a new crest of popularity with his vision of German unity, but the historic happenings in Germany have put him on one of the trickiest tightropes ever walked by a West German leader.

Kohl faces the daunting task of trying to balance euphoria over German unity with international fears about Germany's future direction.

Polls say Kohl's popularity has risen in West Germany because of his vision of German unity.

But his unification rhetoric has set off alarms from Washington to Moscow about Europe's stability, and also resulted in demands that he clarify Bonn's position on former German lands east of the Oder and Neisse rivers that now are part of Poland.

"He's a clever domestic politician but not a foreign policy statesman. However, I wouldn't like to be in his shoes," said Heinrich Vogel, director of the respected Institute for Eastern and International Studies in Cologne.

Kohl has dazzled East Germans by promising that a single Germany will eventually come about.

Federal elections in West Germany are a year away, and the latest opinion polls show Kohl's rightist parties four points ahead of the left-leaning Social Democratic Party after months of running neck-and-neck.

Earlier this year, Kohl's reelection chances had seemed dimmer because of a series of domestic problems attributed by many voters to his weak leadership.

Now, even opposition leaders have been congratulating Kohl for his efforts to bring the two Germanys closer together.

The chancellor, however, finds himself in the touchy position of trying to help East Germany while at the same time fending off some East Germans who warn against a sellout of national interests to West Germany.

A commentator in the Communist Party newspaper Neues Deutschland charged Thursday that some West Germans are telling Kohl: "Better to take in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) as the 12th federal state today than tomorrow."

Kohl apparently has pleased some people with his 10-point unity plan. But if he has to put the breaks on it for whatever reason, there would be disappointment," said Klaus Becher, a political scientist at the German Institute for Foreign Policy in Bonn.

There also is concern that public frustration could lead to unrest in East Germany if unification comes too slowly.

But political experts say Kohl runs the risk of alienating liberal West Germans if he puts too much emphasis on German unity and too little on other domestic concerns such as the environment and unemployment.

East Germany's deep economic and social problems and the revival of the unification dream have left politics in disarray in West Germany.

With Kohl getting much of the credit as the two German nations draw ever closer, a number of commentators are portraying the opposition Social Democrats as a party without a platform.

The Social Democrats have drawn up their own ideas of German unity, foreseeing a loose confederation between the two German states rather than formal unification.

They charge that Kohl hasn't done enough to soothe international worries that Germany could unite and become too mighty.

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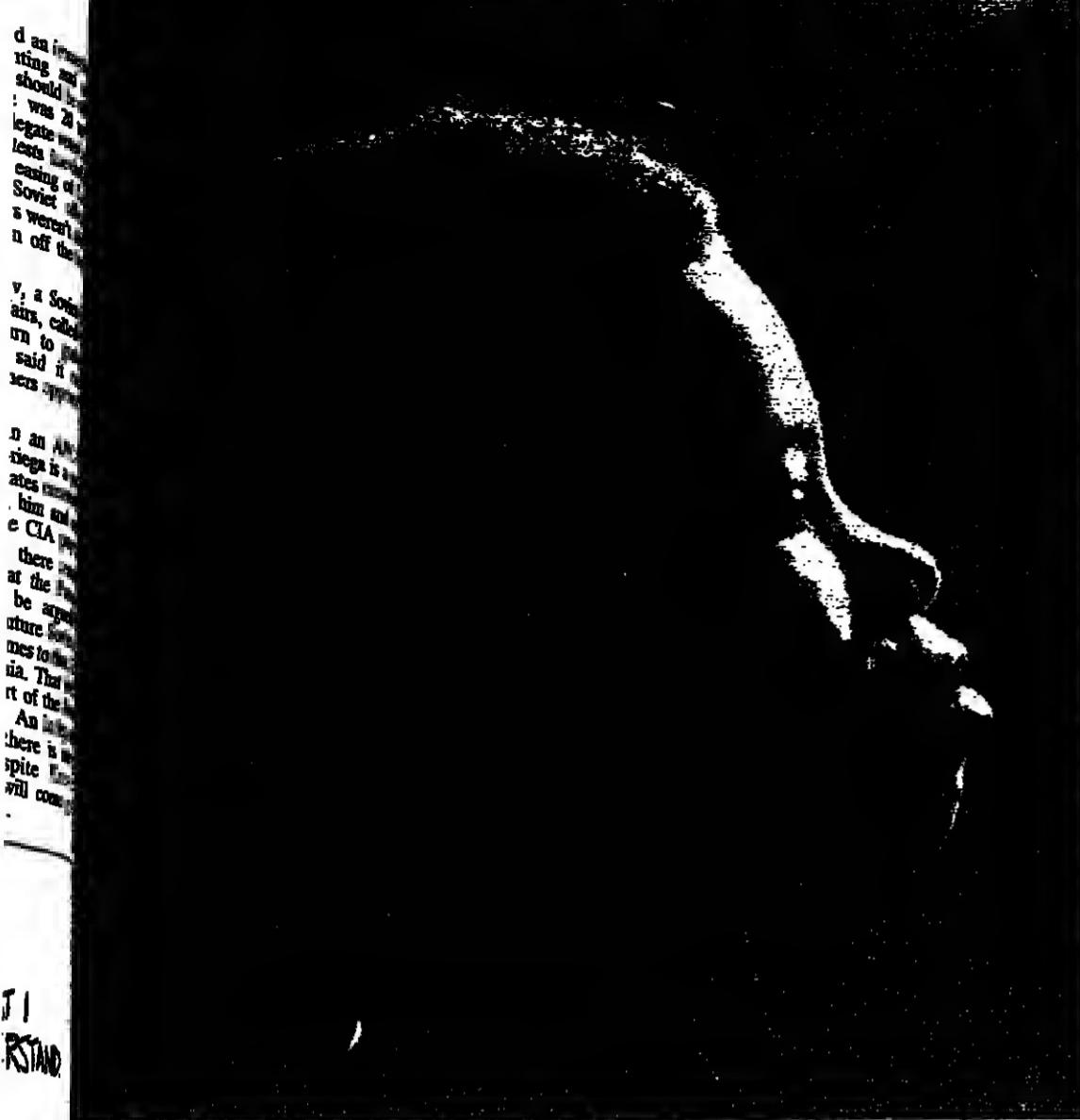


The European Parliament recently demanded that Bonn state its stand on former German territory incorporated into Poland after World War II.

"Poland's western border is unequivocally it has no designs on the land," Pomper said.

Some arch-conservatives in West Germany have questioned the legality of Poland's ownership of the former German territory, which comprises about one-third of a treaty ending World War II technically leaves open any questions about borders.

Sa



Could try harder

The proportion of the developing world's children who are enrolled in primary school is beginning to fall again after 30 years of educational expansion, says this year's State of the World's Children report from UNICEF. In half of the developing nations, the number of 6 to 11 year olds in school is now declining and in two countries out of three educational expenditure per pupil is falling.

"Somehow the momentum of education must be restored," says UNICEF's Executive Director, James Grant. "Not to acquire basic literacy and numeracy is a serious disability for any child. And the failure of society to invest in education will disable, in some degree, all other development efforts."

Ways and means of reversing this trend will be the most urgent item on the agenda of the first World Conference on Education for All which will meet in March 1990 in Thailand. "What is so preoccupying," says the Director-General of UNESCO, a co-sponsor of the conference, "is that the greatest damage seems to have been done at the very foundation of the educational pyramid, in primary education and in basic literacy for adults and out-of-school youth."

Drop-outs

Education is being squeezed, says the report, by the rise in debt repayments and military spending which now account for half of all government expenditures in the developing world.

At the same time, education is being eroded from within by the high drop-out rates. Of the 100 million children who will begin their school careers in the developing world in 1990, for example, over 40 million will drop out before completing primary education. "Most of those children will be unable to fully participate in, or benefit from, the great changes which will surely surround their lives as the 21st century begins," says the report.

In the long-term, no one seriously doubts the priority of investing in schools. It is well established, for example, that education is strongly associated with lower child death rates, lower birth rates, better health and nutrition, and higher incomes. In addition, economic returns from education are higher than from most other kinds of investment. Four years of primary education, for example, can increase farm productivity by 10 per cent or more.

"With such high returns of all kinds available," says Grant, "education for all is an investment which no country can afford not to make."

Hope in Bangladesh

The report cites one experiment which may offer a way of reducing costs and expanding primary enrolment. The 2,500 schools so far opened by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) are demonstrating that progress towards education for all could be resumed in the 1990s by a combination of increased aid and a new priority for primary education.

"In the 1990s," says Grant,

ing simple classrooms. Educated members of the community are recruited to act as teachers. Aimed particularly at the children of the poor and landless, the programme has been remarkably successful in giving three years of basic education to 8 to 10-year olds, over half of them girls, and graduating 95% of its pupils into the fourth grade of the government education system.

Going beyond formal education, the UNICEF report suggests a new effort to support those measures which may offer little immediate advantage but which are essential to the improvement of human lives and human capacities. Aid should be part of a long-term effort to invest in the most reliable of all engines for future growth — a healthy, well-nourished and well-educated people."

Primary priority

The most obvious improvement in efficiency available to most nations would be a tilt in the balance of educational spending in favour of primary schools.

In many countries, a dollar invested in primary education returns twice as much as a dollar invested in higher education. Yet governments commonly devote the majority of educational resources to higher education. "Even a small percentage decrease in unit costs of secondary and higher education," argues the World Bank, "could release additional funds for providing basic education to more people."

Increasing the efficiency of existing schools is also a possible "resource" for the 1990s. In many schools, operating costs have been so reduced that teachers' salaries consume 95% of the budget, leaving little or nothing for such essentials as books, writing materials or blackboards.

If the quality of education falls because operating costs are cut, parents may decide that the costs of education outweigh the benefits.

"Even when primary education itself is free," says the report, "the cost of sending a child to school, in clothes, equipment, bus fares, 'donations', contributions to school fund raising efforts, and the loss of a child's work in fields or homes, can be a large slice of a poor family's income."

Many parents are deciding that these sacrifices are not worthwhile. And usually it is female children who are withdrawn from school first. "More than two thirds of those children who never go to school, or who drop out at too early a stage, are female," says UNICEF.

Hope in Bangladesh

The report cites one experiment which may offer a way of reducing costs and expanding primary enrolment. The 2,500 schools so far opened by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) are demonstrating that basic education, including literacy and numeracy, can be provided for as little as \$15 per pupil per year. The BRAC method involves parents in building

Side-walk Santas

By John Wright
The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — Santa Claus is embroiled in a controversy in Mexico, where critics of the jolly old gift-bearing man say he is threatening the nation's own Christmas traditions by displacing the Child Jesus and upsetting the feast of the epiphany.

"It is not new that we are witnessing an invasion of foreign products and ideas. But it is serious that we are learning to forget Mexico Christmas, which belongs to us," the government's national cultural council says in a pamphlet about Christmas tradition.

The biggest Mexican Christmas celebration is three kings day or the feast of the epiphany Jan. 6. Some people exchange presents Dec. 25, but the gifts were given in celebration of the Christ Child.

Purists see Santa as a cultural interloper much like Halloween — which is threatening Mexico's traditional all saints day, known as day of the dead.

They fear Mexico's traditional roots are being dug up by a tide of imported holiday celebrations. The traditional feasts date back to 16th century Spanish colonial times, and some, like the day of the dead, are blended with Indian Aztec traditions.

One promoter of the man from the north pole is Manuel Herrera, a photographer who runs a sidewalk stand selling Christmas presents on the Alameda, a park in downtown Mexico City.

Herrera denied that Mexico is losing its heritage. "Now we have Santa Claus. After Christmas, we have the kings. They have both, but the children really love Santa Claus," a smiling Herrera said.

On the Alameda, two dozen professional Santas in white cotton beards and thick red robes line up on the sidewalks, ringing bells, whistling, playing music or letting out a cheerful "Feliz Navidad," or "Christmas Greeting," or "ho-ho-ho" to attract their little customers.

The children sit on Santa's lap to have their picture taken — at a cost of about \$4 a day's minimum wage in the capital. Santa splits the money with the photographer.

Some parents get into the picture too — literally. For a little more money, the whole family gets its picture taken in a wooden sleigh, complete with horned Reindeer and Santa at the reins.

One man said that after Christmas the Santas dress up again as kings for the epiphany trade.

The Santa Claus controversy notwithstanding, Mexico still has a rich variety of distinctive Christmas observances.

The 1980's a decade marked by designers, greed and Rambo

By Arthur Spiegelman
Reuter

NEW YORK — It was a decade when fear of herpes gave way to the towering tragedy of aids, a decade when caffeine, cholesterol, red meat and smoking became public enemies while cocaine became the drug of choice for a generation of new addicts.

It was a decade in which rich became celebrated just for being rich and their faces seemed everywhere along with their Guccis, Rolls-Royces and other brand name bangles while thousands of people slept in the streets.

Above all, the experts say, the lifestyle of the 1980s seemed to have been about greed and conspicuous consumption, a decade personalized in the United States by yuppies with heroes like Ivan Boesky, Michael Milken, Donald Trump, Leona Helmsley and Malcolm Forbes (who spent \$2 million on his 70th birthday party).

It was a decade where the poor seemed to become poorer as the Rolling Stones grossed \$90 million by making yet another

farewell tour and baseball players won salaries of up to \$3 million a summer for playing a child's game.

It was also a time when many heroes fell off their pedestals — from Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson, stripped of his Olympic gold medal and world record for using steroids, to Pete Rose, who was on his way to immortality with the most hits in baseball history until his gambling addiction got him banned from the sport for life.

Van Gogh and Rambo

From the playing field to the brokerage house, it was clearly a time of breaking the rules — and getting caught.

The dollar seemed to lose meaning and works of art became the new currency of the very rich. A Van Gogh painting the artist could not sell in his lifetime sold for \$53.9 million, the world record price at auction.

It was the decade of Rambo, a fascist freedom fighter, and Ronald Reagan, whose eight years in the White House seemed to give greed the presidential seal of approval.

It was also a time in which half of American marriages ended in divorce and a quarter of American children lived either in poverty or in one-parent homes.

The decade began with a preoccupation about good sex and ended with an obsession about safe sex.

Paul Slansky, author of "The Clothes Have No Emperor: A Chronicle of the 1980s," a book that detailed the foibles of the decade, said his favorite quote of the 1980s came from Ivan Boesky: "Greed is Healthy."

"People don't think anything of spending immense amounts of money for luxuries. Prestige seems to come from spending more money than necessary," Lurie added.

"It was a designer decade, an attempt to make people feel that money and objects are what counts in this world. What we are depended we own and buy," she added.

Fueling this triumph of materialism in the United States and elsewhere was the media's, especially television's, ability to promote never-ending images of wealth and things to buy. "It was as if television took over people's brains and laundered them," said Lurie.



Swiss summer fashions for 1990:

This Spanish night's blouse has a checkered cowl collar in St. Gall guipure embroidery from NAEF Nueesch

It's striking hood makes this blouse with a graphic embroidery trimming from Bischoff Textile very elegant

It's striking hood makes this blouse with a graphic embroidery trimming from Bischoff Textile very elegant

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Israel privatisation programme dealt a major setback

TEL AVIV (R) — The Israeli parliament dealt a severe blow to the government's privatisation programme recently when the key finance committee voted against the sale of a majority stake in Israel Chemicals Ltd (ICL).

Finance Minister Shimon Peres had slated ICL, Israel's most profitable public enterprise, as the first major firm to be sold in a drive to attract foreign investment and make industry more competitive internationally.

The setback follows repeated delays in Peres' efforts to sell off commercial banks, in which the government holds a majority of shares but not of voting rights.

"Today no foreign investor will take us seriously any more," a finance ministry official commented last week when the vote was cast.

The Knesset Finance Committee voted 22-4 to recommend the government retain control of ICL because of its hold over Israel's only natural resources and its centrality to the economy, especially in the underdeveloped Negev desert region.

Instead it suggested selling a minority of shares on the Tel Aviv stock exchange and to ICL employees.

The vote cast doubt on government plans to raise up to \$5 billion over five years by selling more than 20 firms.

Finance ministry officials said the government had hoped to raise \$400 million by selling just over 50 per cent of ICL to foreign investors by April 1990.

Ten serious bidders had been identified, including British publisher Robert Maxwell, whose representatives were barred by angry workers from inspecting ICL's Dead Sea Works phosphate plant last week.

Jewish diaspora backers of Israel, in an economic think-tank called operation "Independence," warned Peres in a letter this week that failure to proceed with the sale of ICL could jeopardise the entire privatisation programme.

Economic experts said the programme was important if Israel was to compete in the European Community's post-1992 single market.

ICL earned a net profit of \$38.7 million in the first half of 1989, compared with \$23 million in the same period last year, the company reported in October.

First-half sales were \$350 million, of which more than \$300 million were exports.

Also slated for privatisation

are Israel's oil refineries, the El Al Airline and Elta Electronics, a subsidiary of military industrial giant Israel Aircraft Industries.

Koor needs new management

The finance committee demanded that control of the struggling Koor conglomerate be wrested from the Histadrut Labour Federation.

No decision was taken on a request from Koor Industries Ltd for government aid, but committee members reported wide accord on the need for new management at Israel's largest industrial concern.

"The members are reaching the conclusion Koor must be rescued from the present owner and another outside operator must be put in charge with the professional skill and the possibility to weight only business considerations," said committee member Ariel Weinstein.

Koor employs about 25,000 people, more than 10 per cent Israel's industrial workforce.

"The government should invest \$200 million in Koor, hand the management to a professional team and later sell the concern to the public," said committee member Haim Ramon.

The committee agreed to meet Monday to continue discussing Koor, which has more than a billion dollars in debts.

Board Chairman Arnon Gafny said in a television interview that Koor's creditors agreed it was better to attempt a recovery than to liquidate the firm.

"The cost of recovery in the direction we are headed is less than the cost of breaking up (Koor) or bankruptcy," Gafny said.

The firm, saying it could not cover its debts, asked the finance ministry last Sunday for a government guarantee in order to avoid default on its U.S. bonds.

The Histadrut said Monday it would be ready to yield part ownership in return for funds. The government dropped an earlier offer to give Koor \$50 million in return for equity because of dissatisfaction with Koor's recovery plan.

Koor presented the five-year recovery plan last month, including a request to write off \$125 million in debts.

But Israeli banks, owed more than \$800 million, rejected the plan. Banking sources said they would accept a large debt write-off only in return for a tougher recovery plan.

India's growth rate to slow to four per cent

NEW DELHI (R) — India's economic growth, strapped by trade and fiscal deficits and ballooning foreign debts, will slow to four per cent this year, a government white paper on the economy said.

A newly-established Council of Economic Advisors called for crucial modifications in the economic policies of the past five years, saying it was fueling inflation and pressuring India's balance of payments.

The new National Front government of Vishwanath Singh has already pledged to devote half of all government resources to the agricultural sector and to write off loans of \$500 million to poor farmers and rural workers.

The government should "concentrate on a broad-based growth pattern with emphasis on removing disparities between sections of the population and regions rather than aim at a higher rate of growth in aggregate output," the economic advisers said.

India's gross domestic product growth will likely be four per cent at the end of the fiscal year in March against a robust nine per cent the previous year, said the paper released at the weekend.

It said India's foreign debt as of March 1989 was \$51.2 billion and will rise even higher at the end of this financial year.

The World Bank, in its recently-released world debt tables, adds in India's short-term loans and puts the debt figure at \$7 billion, the fourth highest in the developing world after Argentina's.

The paper said the debt was

not a serious concern. "The real problem is that the burden of debt service reduces greatly the room for manoeuvre on the development front as well as in the choice of development strategies."

Recurring deficits and escalating debt repayments were severely straining the country's balance of payments. The paper recommended controlling government subsidies and slashing defence spending.

"The reduction in tensions in the world as a whole and improved relations with our neighbours can provide the basis for containing defence expenditure," the advisers said.

New Delhi's defence budget doubled in real terms during the 1980s. Since 1986 it has ranked as the world's largest arms importer, buying \$5.2 billion worth in 1987 alone, foreign defence analysts said.

The fiscal deficit, estimated at \$4.5 billion in this year's budget, will likely turn out much higher, the paper said.

India has been running annual trade deficits of more than \$5 billion over the past three years, according to official figures.

Large capital-intensive projects using a lot of imported machinery should be scrapped or delayed, the paper said.

The emphasis should be on diversified agricultural growth and rural employment to stimulate demand for cheaper, simpler, domestic manufactured goods which would save foreign exchange.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sunday, December 24, 1989
Central Bank official rates

U.S. dollar	Buy 644.0	Sell 650.0	French franc 110.3	111.4
Pound Sterling	1046.1	1058.6	Japanese yen (for 100)	452.6 457.1
Deutschmark	377.7	388.9	Dutch guilder 334.0	337.3
Swiss franc	413.7	419.9	Swedish crown 102.4	103.4
			Italian lira (for 100)	50.4 50.9
			Belgian franc (for 10)	177.3 179.1

Jordan Times Tel: 667171-6

Japan approves 1990 draft budget

TOKYO (AP) — For the first time in 15 years, the Japanese government Sunday approved a draft budget that does not rely on deficit-financing bonds.

The finance ministry's \$6.273-trillion-yen (\$46.7 billion) spending plan for fiscal 1990, which begins next March, was accepted by the cabinet in a special meeting.

The budget represents a 9.7 per cent rise over current fiscal year spending and calls for a 5.5 per cent increase in defence outlay and 5.9 per cent rise in official development assistance.

Because of economic expansion, the defence budget will dip below one per cent of Japan's gross national product (GNP) for the first time in years, standing at 0.991 per cent of the GNP.

In the mid-1970s Japan adopted a policy of keeping defence spending to within one per cent of the GNP, but since 1986 it has hovered just above that figure. Defence spending in the coming fiscal year will be 4.135 trillion yen (\$29.1 billion).

Further negotiations will fine-tune specific allocations for the final version of the budget, approval of which is expected next Friday, a senior Finance Ministry official said.

The cabinet also approved a supplementary budget for the current fiscal year, at 5.897 trillion yen (\$31.5 billion) the largest stop-gap budget ever.

The greatest thrust of this year's budget is the desire of the government to end its dependence on deficit-financing bonds," the ministry official, who would not be quoted by name, told reporters. "Since they were first introduced in 1975, we have made earnest efforts to end this dependency. We were finally able to rid ourselves of this unhealthy system."

The government issued 1.33 trillion yen (\$9.3 billion) worth of deficit-financing bonds last year to cover the budget's red ink. That amount will be made up in part by an infusion in fiscal 1990 of 1.3 trillion yen (\$9.15 billion) from government sales last year of its shares in Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp., as well as increased tax revenues, the official said.

Non-deficit-financing government bonds to be issued next year total 5.63 trillion yen (\$39.6 billion), itself a drop of 20.8 per cent from fiscal 1989, according to the draft budget.

Official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries will rise 5.9 per cent to about 800 billion yen (\$5.6 billion). Japan has pledged to provide more than \$50 billion in ODA over a five-year period beginning in 1988.

The government will also boost spending on social security programmes 6.2 per cent over the current fiscal year to 11.573 trillion yen (\$81.5 billion), a third of all general expenditures in the fiscal 1990 budget.

"It remains imperative that fis-

RJ strives to maintain pace in airline bullfight over fares

By Marium M. Shakir
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — As the airline business around the globe becomes increasingly competitive and as deregulation policies are spreading from North America to Western Europe and possibly beyond,

national airline carriers such as Jordan's Royal Jordanian (RJ) are having to take a second look at some of their promotion and incentive policies.

Responding to a growing encroachment on its markets, Royal Jordanian has taken steps to increase commercial and travel incentives for their customers.

Moves to increase incentives was seen by observers as realistic and necessary since "other airline companies have slashed prices and offered travel perks in order to win a greater share of the market in the Middle East. It is only appropriate that RJ joins in the bullfight to increase its share in the market," said one observer.

Observers saw the decision to increase the incentives resulting from moves made by other, mostly European airlines, to lure more customers with promises of lower prices. "Some airlines" noted one observer in the airline business, "were giving more convenient deals to the travel agents and RJ was being undercut even in its home market."

However, every airline has to ensure that it remains within the boundaries of international commercial aviation agreements and respect the International Air Transport Association (IATA) rules.

RJ has adopted certain customer incentives which other airline carriers are also using to make travel packages more attractive to passengers. The introduction of "the frequent flyer package" gives certain benefits to the traveller who accumulates a specified number of miles within a given time period. These include upgrading tickets, occasional free tickets and VIP lounge privileges.

In an attempt to increase tourism in the Kingdom, RJ has also introduced a "free stop-over in Jordan" package, which allows passengers to stay in the country at a minimal cost or even free of charge for one or two nights depending on the agreement.

Airway personnel, civil servants, diplomats, journalists, students and the handicapped are among the professional and social groups which are given discounts on RJ flights. This is a reciprocation of what many international airlines offer to similar clients as well.

Moves to increase incentives

be a common practice in the age of supersonic jets. Age of equipment, the quality of the airlines ground and air service, convenience of arrival and departure times, advertising, reservation services and prices are all factors that influence the clients' decision when choosing a flight and airline, according to one senior RJ official.

After two announced price rises by RJ earlier this year — a 28 per cent increase last January and a 12 per cent increase in April — other airline companies apparently began allowing for greater profit margins for the travel agents by increasing the discounts, thus undermining RJ flights to destinations in Europe and the United States.

One RJ official conceded that undercutting prices had long been a "tactic" in the free market economy world and thus "we can't actually say it was not fair play," as long as it stays within international rules and regulations on tariffs.

As more and more countries in the world are turning to a free market economy, prices competition among airlines is increasing constantly. "Many a national airline would go straight under if it did not have the promotion and protection of the public sector" said the representative of one airline stationed here.

Deregulation of prices has long been allowed for in the United States. An RJ official conceded that undercutting prices had long been a "tactic" in the free market economy world and thus "we can't actually say it was not fair play," as long as it stays within international rules and regulations on tariffs.

The EC and the Soviet Union on December 18 signed an economic pact hailed as opening the way to closer pan-European integration as the East-West divide crumbles.

"The 1990s will turn out to be an era of regional blocs," Addeji said.

The OAU has sketched a timetable which sees an African common market being formed over 10 years from 1998 as a prelude to developing an African economic community over the next 20 years. The timetable allows two years for ratification of the treaty after its expected submission for signature in 1991.

Meanwhile, Haggag and Addeji say, it is vital for Africa's several sub-regional economic alliances to accelerate efforts to achieve integration, and smooth the way for pan-African unity.

Such alliances date back to the formation of the 16-nation economic community of West African states in 1975. Yet targets have slipped and intra-African trade still accounts for only four per cent of the continent's total trade.

"Regionalism (abroad) and the inevitable concomitant development of the intensification of protectionism will make Africa a major loser in world trade," says Addeji, executive secretary of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa.

As examples of the challenges lie ahead, Addeji lists the single, barrier-free market to be created by the 12-nation European Community after 1992, the existing U.S.-Canada free trade area and a proposed giant, Asia-Pacific rim grouping linking that region with North America.

Political and economic analysts are divided on how far the rush of Western interest in the liberalising East bloc will affect the Middle East.

A European Community official in Cairo said: "Our choice is not East or South. It is East and South."

Middle East concern is focused on funds from EC countries, particularly private investment.

"Despite (EC) assurances... there are well-founded and legitimate worries on the part of Third World Mediterranean countries," the left-wing Moroc-

can newspaper Al Bayane said. Investors must weigh the Middle East's cheaper workforce against the better-trained workforce of Eastern Europe.

"The jobs that can come here in labour intensive industries are not going to go to Eastern Europe. Wages are still lower here," a Cairo-based Western diplomat said.

"Most countries are going to hold off investing in Eastern Europe until they are sure (the political changes there) will last," an economist said. "In the Middle East people are more confident of investing because in the end there is always oil."

Analysts added that while some EC cash might be diverted to the East bloc, the United States, the Middle East's biggest source of funds, was more likely to keep its current levels.

The United States pour billions of dollars of aid into the Middle East, Israel and Egypt, the world's leading recipients of U.S. aid, together receive more than \$35 billion annually in economic and military assistance.

The region's political volatility, its oil, and its strategic importance in the Mediterranean are good reasons for the United States to maintain its financial support.

But some American business men said they might in time prefer to work in Eastern Europe, where customs are more familiar than in the Middle East's Muslim societies.

The analysts said Japan still viewed the Middle East, particularly rich oil-producing Gulf states, as a better market for its consumer goods than the cash-starved East bloc.

THE BETTER HALF.

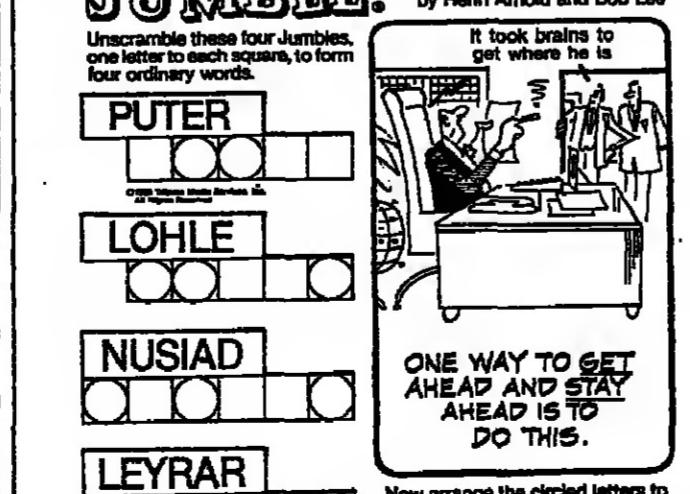
By Harris



"The best way to keep love alive is to give it mouth-to-mouth resuscitation!"

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRABBLE WORD GAME
by Harry Arnold and Bob Lee



S. African beaches open for all

DURBAN, South Africa (AP) — Black and white children helped each other build sandcastles. Their older brothers played soccer together. White life-guards shouted warnings in Zulu.

After tears of debate, protests and occasional violence, South Africa has opened all its beaches to all races and buried one of its most visible and resented apartheid practices.

As recently as August, police used whips and dogs to keep blacks off segregated sand. But at Durban's hotel-lined beachfront, the busiest in the country, the attitude Sunday was swim and let swim.

"I preferred segregated beaches," said Charles Erasmus, a vacationing white. "But what am I going to do? Spite myself and not go swimming? The law's been changed and we'll have to accept it."

President F.W. de Klerk last month declared an end to whites-only beaches, settling a conflict that arose every December when hundreds of thousands of South Africans travel to the coast for vacation.

For authorities, opening the beaches has proved far easier than keeping them segregated in the face of mounting black protest.

Shortly before de Klerk's dec-

laration, the Durban City Council spent six hours debating whether to open the last remaining stretches of segregated beach.

Their solution: Remove the embarrassing "whites only" signs but keep the law in effect.

Days after de Klerk's announcement, the council voted 24-5 to integrate the beaches.

Morris Flynn, a mixed-race man who was arrested several times for cutting down "whites only" beach signs, ceremoniously buried his saw in the sand to mark the formal death of beach apartheid.

Three years ago, Allan Hendricks, the first mixed-race member of the cabinet, invited the press to watch him take a dip at a whites-only beach at Port Elizabeth.

One of his next public acts was to apologise for his swim after receiving a tongue-lashing from then-President P.W. Botha.

Anti-apartheid groups targeted beaches along with other segregated facilities when they launched a nationwide defiance campaign in August.

When protesters arrived at a

beach near Cape Town, it was cordoned off and accompanied by signs saying, "police dog training in progress."

When the demonstrators proceeded, they were met with tear gas, whips and police dogs. Several people were injured.

Local authorities have complied with de Klerk's proclamation, though under protest in some cases. But there have been no reports of racial violence, or even serious overcrowding, since the beaches were opened.

"Look, there are thousands of people here and no confrontations," said Walter Buthelezi, a black 19-year-old who was visiting the beachfront with his sisters. "There was never any need for segregated beaches."

But Durban's Mayor Derrick Waterson disagrees.

"This wouldn't have happened easily five years ago, conservative whites weren't ready for it," he said.

Waterson and his council have received more than 400 complaints from whites. In the town of Mossel Bay, about 2,500 whites have signed a petition asking for a return to segregated beaches.

Many whites insist they are not racist and say they want separate beaches because of "cultural differences."

Some blacks swim in their underwear and strip naked when washing off under the shower nozzles at the beach, the whites complain.

"It's mostly older people that get offended, but when we talk to the blacks they always cooperate," said lifeguard Liam Halferty.

Halferty and his colleagues have been taking a crash course in Zulu to help them communicate with black bathers. Roughly 15 per cent of the beach crowd was black this weekend, traditionally one of the busiest of the year in Durban.

"I'm sure some whites stayed away," said Carol Cilliers, who is white. "It will take about two or three years before they will come back to these beaches."

De Klerk has promised to remove all discriminatory laws, and most so-called "petty apartheid" measures already have been scrapped.

The major remaining areas of segregation are public schools, residential areas, and public hospitals. De Klerk has pledged to keep these separate for whites who want them, and many still do.

"Beaches are one thing, schools and neighbourhoods are another," said Leo Kotze, a white vacationer. "I think whites will resist those changes."

1987 has less to do with thawing East-West tensions than with the booming Japanese economy.

"At this stage, we remain very prudent and cautious (about East-West relations)," one official told reporters.

Nakasone's decision to scrap the 11-year-old ceiling in 1987,

aiming to increase Japanese self-reliance in defence, was criticised by some of its neighbours in Asia who were worried about a possible resurgence of Japanese militarism.

Tokyo's defence budget is the third biggest in the world, after the United States and the Soviet

Union, but that is partly because of high personnel expenses.

The draft budget proposed by the Finance Ministry for the fiscal year beginning in April calls for the 5.5 per cent increase in defence spending, following a 5.9 per cent increase.

Finance Ministry officials said they rejected many defence agency requests for new equipment, including 30 new tanks and a 136 billion yen (\$94 million) destroyer with a sophisticated Aegis missile system.

Instead the proposed budget put more emphasis on improved logistics and support services.

The Finance Ministry agreed to the minimum budget needed to support an efficient and balanced self-defence forces in the final year of the mid-term plan," one ministry official said.

Finance Ministry officials said spending to help the United States offset the cost of troops stationed in Japan would rise more than 40 per cent next fiscal year, to 45.9 billion yen (\$320 million).

Strapped with a big budget deficit, Washington has been pressing Tokyo to pick up a bigger share of the tab for keeping U.S. troops in Japan.

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But the drop back below the

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ceiling strapped by former Prime

Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone in

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Woman killed in Christmas Eve storm

BRISBANE, Australia (AP) — One woman died, eight light planes were wrecked and 45,000 homes in the Brisbane area were left without power by a violent Christmas Eve storm, police said. The woman died after her boat overturned, trapping her, when the storm hit Bribie Island, 56 kilometres north of Brisbane, Sunday afternoon. Her body was recovered Sunday night by police divers. The storm swept across a wide area, uprooting trees and damaging cars and houses. Police said eight light aircraft were overturned at one airport and that many homes were likely to be without power until Christmas morning. In some southern suburbs of Brisbane, 7.5 centimetres of rain fell in 15 minutes, accompanied by thunder and lightning.

6 hurt, high-rise evacuated in fire

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A raging pre-dawn fire chased 106 residents from a 14-story condominium, burned two construction sites and set the roofs of five expensive homes ablaze before it was doused. Five firefighters suffered minor injuries and an 83-year-old woman was hospitalised for smoke inhalation. The fire broke out around before dawn in a four-story apartment building that was in the final stages of construction and spread to the condominium tower and to a three-story apartment building. It hopped Wilshire Boulevard, one of the city's main thoroughfares, and ignited chemical drums at a construction site and residential roofs downwind. The cause was unknown but arson teams were investigating, said city fire chief Donald Manning. Four hundred firefighters battled the blaze in the neighbourhood between the exclusive Los Angeles Country Club and the University of California, Los Angeles. Firefighters had to battle thick smoke and extreme heat to evacuate the apartment building's residents.

Record cold wave hits Florida

FLORIDA (AP) — A cold snap across the United States has been blamed for the deaths of at least 73 people by Sunday, after setting record low temperatures in 112 places, the national weather service said. Yankton, South Dakota, at 31 degrees below zero Fahrenheit (34 degrees below zero Celsius) was the official coldest spot in the lower 48 states Saturday. Twenty-six states have been hit by frigid weather since Dec. 15. Cold and snow burst into Florida Saturday, threatening fruit and vegetable crops, as Arctic air forced temperatures to more record lows. Three utilities in Texas had to institute "rolling blackouts" because they couldn't keep up with demand for power. Other utilities asked customers to conserve power and shut off service to some commercial clients, and heating oil and propane were high priced and in short supply in some areas. Power was also in short supply in Virginia and Florida. Low-temperature records for the date were set or tied in Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. But temperatures in many areas were not quite so low as Friday, and a change was edging in from the west.

Ershad reshuffles cabinet

DHAKA (R) — President Hossain Mohammad Ershad Sunday dismissed four ministers and reshuffled six others, an official announcement said. Those sacked were Forest and Environment Minister Mayeethul Islam, Textile Minister Retired Colonel M.A. Malek, Food Minister Retired Major Iqbal Hossain Chowdhury and State Minister of Industries Noor Mohammad Khan. No reason was given for their removal. The announcement said Ershad also reallocated portfolios of six ministers. Deputy Prime Minister Shah Moazzem Hossain was moved from the Ministry of Labour and Manpower and put in charge of the Ministry of Food. Sirajul Hossain Khan, minister of relief and rehabilitation, was transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Manpower. Former Jute Minister Retired Lt. Colonel Zafar Imam was sent to the Ministry of Forest and Environment while Youth and Sports Minister A.B.M. Rubul Azim Howlader became the new minister of textiles. Tajul Islam Chowdhury, state minister of agriculture has been transferred to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, while State Minister for Information Syed Deedar Bakht was moved to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

3 Ecuadorans die trying to catch gifts

GUAYAQUIL, Ecuador (AP) — At least three people died Saturday when hundreds of people rushed to grab Christmas gifts that the mayor threw from the balcony of the town hall, police said. A television report showed the crowd surging to catch the gifts. It also aired footage of people trying to revive the victims through artificial resuscitation. Police said three people died by asphyxiation and 20 people were injured. Mayor Elsa Bucaram, of the Populist Ecuadorian Roldosista Party, decided to throw the Christmas presents from the balcony against the advice of some who warned of the dangers.

Mexican police assault journalists

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A band of city police officers allegedly robbed a newspaper reporter and shot her in the head and severely beat two other journalists at a downtown street corner, news reports said. Five officers on Saturday allegedly confronted reporters Elvira de Marcelo Esquivel of the Mexican City newspaper El Dia, Israel Rodriguez of the government newspaper El Nacional and Eduardo Barrera Valencia of Channel 11 on Ealders Street, a busy city thoroughfare, the Excelsior News Agency reported. The officers allegedly beat and pistol-whipped the reporters and shot Ms. Esquivel in the head, Excelsior said. Ms. Esquivel was in a coma and listed in critical condition at the Red Cross Hospital in the Polanco District, said Alejandro Bello, a doctor at the facility. Rodriguez and Barrera Valencia were in serious condition, Bello said. There were no arrests early Sunday. City Attorney Ignacio Morales Lechuga promised a full investigation.

Gorbachev is Time man of the '80s

NEW YORK (AP) — Mikhail Gorbachev, whose political and economic reforms in the Soviet Union sparked a revolution that shattered Communist control of Eastern Europe, was named man of the decade by Time magazine.

"Somehow confining our choice to 1989 seemed inadequate, and thus we named Gorbachev man of the decade," the editor of the U.S. weekly magazine said.

The Soviet president previously named Time's man of the year in 1987, was chosen because he is "the force behind the most momentous of the '80s and because what he has already done will almost certainly shape the future," Time said.

The only precedent for such a choice by the magazine was its selection of Winston Churchill as man of the half-century in 1949.

"This year, as world attention ricocheted from the stirrings of

events that began well before 1989 and whose impact would extend into the next decade, perhaps the next century," the magazine said.

The magazine said Gorbachev "has accelerated history, making possible the end of one of its most disreputable episodes, the imposition of a cruel and unnatural order on hundreds of millions of people."

Gorbachev becomes only the fourth non-American designated twice by the magazine. One was Churchill (1940 and 1949); the others were Soviet leader Josef Stalin (1939 and 1942) and China's Deng Xiaoping (1978 and 1985).

Time has been naming a man of the year since 1927, choosing the "person who, for better or worse, has had the most impact on the year's events." The first award went to aviator Charles Lindbergh; last year's winner was Earth and planet of the year.



Mikhail Gorbachev

democracy in the USSR to the massacre in Peking and the peaceful revolts in Eastern Europe, it became clear that we were witnessing a sequence of

East Germany's New Forum to take part in free elections

EAST BERLIN (R) — East Germany's umbrella opposition group New Forum announced Sunday it would contest free elections next May, shedding its past reluctance to enter fully into the political arena.

The group told the East German News Agency (ADN) its main aim would remain overseeing East Germany's transition

to democracy but that it would also put up its own candidates for the Volkskammer (parliament).

"As a political group we remain open for citizens with different philosophies and opinions who share the common aim of a democratic society working together," a New Forum spokesman said.

The group told the East German News Agency (ADN) its main aim would remain overseeing East Germany's transition

to democracy but that it would also put up its own candidates for the Volkskammer (parliament).

The decision, taken at a meeting Saturday, appeared to be a compromise between members who wanted to turn New Forum into a political party and those who wanted to retain its role as a citizens' initiative movement.

Since New Forum emerged as a powerful voice of protest in September, the country has also opened its borders to the West.

Colombian drug smuggler extradited

in 1984, just before the trial in New York where he was found guilty of numerous cocaine offences, said the statement.

The fugitive was arrested by Colombian police in the city of Cali on Oct. 13 and turned over Saturday night to U.S. Marshals, who flew him back to New York City early Sunday. He was being held at an undisclosed location pending a court hearing to set a date for his sentencing, the U.S. Marshals Service said.

According to the Marshals Service, Mera-Mosquera fled the United States in February 1984, when he

was freed in the mistaken belief that he had been ordered released.

While still a fugitive, Mera-Mosquera was convicted in U.S. district court in Manhattan along with 10 other people of the drug charges. The indictment charged that he was one of two leaders of an organisation that dealt in massive quantities of cocaine," the Marshals Service said.

The Marshals Service carries out the extraditions of persons in foreign nations who are charged with violating federal laws in the United States.

CINCINNATI, Ohio (AP) — The Christmas menu at the county jail of turkey, dressing and cranberry sauce started some inmates thinking that they may be eating better than some people on the outside. Len Singleton, who is serving time for disorderly conduct and resisting arrest, wrote a letter to Sheriff Simon Lois Jr., asking permission to organise a collection among the inmates. Some 500 inmates at the Hamilton County Justice Centre and Cincinnati's Community Correctional Institution responded.

"The violence being committed by the Ceausescu clique and forces of power connected with it against their own people is a tragic confirmation of the murderous criminality which the Stalinist deformation of totalitarianism can lead to."

Polish President Wojciech Jaruzelski said instigators of Romania's national tragedy had not learned from other countries that had made peaceful transi-

tions to democracy, the Polish News Agency (PAP) reported.

"Unfortunately they did not draw any conclusions from the experience of other states and nations aiming at democracy and at peaceful departure from an anachronistic system of executing power," Jaruzelski told Polish Television.

"Having ignored and even criticised this experience, they came up against an objective process of a historical development of societies."

Stockholm, which adopted the symbol of an Indian in feathered headdress puffing a peace pipe, says it just wants a fair deal for smokers and non-smokers alike.

In 10 months it has attracted 1,500 members. Some are non-smokers offended by discrimination, Oste said, and 53 percent are women.

"Smokers have to back down a bit, so as not to harm or irritate non-smokers," said Oste, an anchorwoman for Swedish television news who says he has been a pipe smoker for 45 years.